

The Marriage of Heaven & Hell



William Blake

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read by Nick Duncan

William Blake

The Marriage of Heaven and Hell

The work was composed between 1790 and 1793, in the period of radical foment and political conflict immediately after the French Revolution. The title is an ironic reference to Emanuel Swedenborg's theological work *Heaven and Hell* published in Latin 33 years earlier. Swedenborg is directly cited and criticized by Blake several places in the *Marriage*. Though Blake was influenced by his grand and mystical cosmic conception, Swedenborg's conventional moral structures and his Manichean view of good and evil led Blake to express a deliberately depolarized and unified vision of the cosmos in which the material world and physical desire are equally part of the divine order, hence, a marriage of heaven and hell. The book is written in prose, except for the opening "Argument" and the "Song of Liberty". The book describes the poet's visit to Hell, a device adopted by Blake from Dante's *Inferno* and Milton's *Paradise Lost*. (Summary by Wikipedia)

Read by Nick Duncan. Total running time: 0:41:30

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